

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-FL 13) today voted against a whopping \$81 billion tax hike on entrepreneurs and others who invest in the economy and create jobs. Masquerading as a plan to suspend the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) for one year, the bill is financed through a tax increase.

The bill passed the House over Buchanan's objection and now goes to the Senate, where a top Democratic leader said it was unlikely to pass.

"Only in Washington would we raise taxes in the name of lowering taxes," said Buchanan. "We can 'fix' the AMT, without asking a single American to pay higher taxes."

Buchanan has co-sponsored legislation (H.R. 1366) to permanently repeal the AMT without raising taxes. He also has co-sponsored legislation to extend tax cuts for working families and has introduced a constitutional amendment to balance the federal budget.

The \$81 billion tax increase approved by the House today is the first installment of House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charlie Rangel's proposed \$1.3 trillion dollar tax increase -- the largest individual tax increase in American history. The so-called "Mother of all Tax Hikes" was proposed by Rangel to offset the elimination of the AMT. In addition, Rangel plans to let expire the tax cuts of 2001 and 2003, resulting in a \$3.5 trillion tax increase. According to a nonpartisan report by the Joint Committee on Taxation, by 2011, 94 million families earning between \$20,000 and \$200,000 will see a tax hike under plan, while only 800,000 families will see a tax reduction.

Under the Rangel plan, Florida's taxpayers are hit the hardest. According to the non-partisan Tax Foundation, Florida would face about a \$2.3 billion tax increase in 2008 alone -- bearing the nation's largest share of this misguided tax increase.

"Florida taxpayers are already struggling to pay their mortgages, afford sky-high property insurance costs, and keep up with high property taxes," said Buchanan. "Area businesses are feeling the pinch of the slow down in the real estate market. Raising taxes in an economic slowdown is the LAST thing we should be doing."

"Raising taxes would discourage investment, put people out of work, and cost the federal government revenue that is badly needed to help balance the budget, added Buchanan. "What we need to do is change the way we do business in Washington by eliminating wasteful spending and balancing the budget without raising taxes."